

LAND USE POLICY PLAN

NOLENSVILLE, TENNESSEE

The task of making zoning and subdivision decisions, which by and large determine how people may or may not use their land, is a massive one for any city. It is therefore incumbent upon the planning commission and the legislative body to give careful scrutiny to each property owner's request. However, it is also extremely important that the interests of the entire community are considered so that individual development decisions fit into the goals and plans for the future of the town. In addition to reviewing individual requests, the planning commission must formulate and implement development policies that provide guidance into the future. Therefore, the land use policies enumerated below are intended to give guidance to those individual decisions and develop a total framework for the future.

A fundamental problem of land development in the community is the introduction of unexpected and large-scale change. In confronting this problem community leaders must generally perform a delicate balancing act. They must strive to maintain community stability and provide direction to new growth so that overall goals are achieved while at the same time adapting their plans to provide for the flexibility needed in a dynamic market environment. Many forces instigating change originate outside the community and, consequently, are difficult to anticipate. Nevertheless, the planning commission must provide sufficiently flexible land use policies to accommodate change and provide the continuity and stability so that investments can be made with predictability and community goals realized.

A policy plan is not a precise forecast for future development. In a private market economy some land use changes can't be forced to occur; however, it does provide a medium for guiding decision-makers in their efforts to manage and direct community development. Ideally, the land use plan identifies specific goals of the community and then relates general policies for achieving them. The goals and policies are then carried out through the use of the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, utility installations, and capital improvements program and budget.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE TOWN

The Town of Nolensville is a small community based upon a 2000 U. S. Census population of 3,099. It has historically been a rural area with a small business district on the main highway, Nolensville Road. However, the town is situated geographically in the midst of a major suburban growth area. It is located in the northeast corner of Williamson County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state. It is near the Rutherford County line, also one of the fastest growing counties in the state, and Rutherford County is also one of the leading counties in the creation of new jobs. Immediately to the west of

Nolensville lies the City of Brentwood, a city that is rapidly growing.

A major constraint on growth in the past has been the lack of adequate sewer service and capacity. The Metro Nashville Department of Water and Sewerage Services has now removed this constraint with the completion of a new trunk sewer line. The trunk line will provide adequate capacity to service the area within the current municipal boundaries as well as the land area within the urban growth boundary. Requests for new land development generated by the availability of the sewer service have already begun and will continue.

Another impetus for growth in the area is the education system of Williamson County. It is generally considered to be an excellent system, thus attracting new residents with children to the county. Nolensville will benefit from this system as well, and the Board of Education has recently purchased land in the Nolensville area that will house a new elementary and a middle school to feed the newly constructed Ravenwood High School.

Projecting Nolensville's population is pure speculation. It is always more reliable to project on a larger geographical scale such as the county or the state. In any case, projections must be done in order to plan for a community. In 2000, Nolensville made up 2.45 percent of Williamson County's population. Using the county's projections and holding the same percentage, a population of 4,407 by 2015 is computed. However, it is very likely that Nolensville will increase its percentage of the total county population as the area of the town is increased and new growth occurs. The addition of the number of building permits issued since 2000 yields a current estimate of population of 3,273 using an average household size of 3.1 persons per household as reported by the Bureau of the Census for 2000. Assuming completion of Bent Creek, Nolen Park and Ballenger Farms in ten years yields a 2015 population 6,916 without any other developments. Then, by including the three developments on Sunset Road that have been processed through the county in an area recently annexed into the Town, a population by 2015 of 8,814 is calculated. Should this occur and using the county's 2015 population projection of 207,330, Nolensville will be 4.1 percent of the total county.

It can also be assumed that other new developments will occur within the town and in the growth boundary with perhaps more in a trade area. Therefore, a projected population by 2015 of 10,000 is not out of reason.

VISION STATEMENT AND GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Nolensville, as a community has existed since the 1800s. It was not until 1996 the town incorporated as a municipality as the Town of Nolensville. Since the time of its incorporation, the Town has taken a proactive approach to planning. Several planning studies were conducted to determine potential growth areas, the desired rate of growth and the desired outcomes from growth. A visioning process was also conducted. From these beginnings and with continuing reassessment by the planning commission the following goals and objectives and vision were formulated.

Vision Statement

Nolensville should retain its small town character, scenic value, and ecological quality while accommodating carefully controlled growth. Such growth should provide housing opportunities, needed community services and shopping opportunities, job creation, fiscal revenues, and the necessary infrastructure to support growth. Growth should be compact, land efficient and not pose a financial strain on the municipal government and its existing residents.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Preserve and enhance the existing small town character of Nolensville while creating a strong sense of town identity and community or “sense of place”.

Objectives:

- a. Develop mandatory commercial design guidelines that promote high standards of design appropriate in scale, appearance and use for a small town.*
- b. Construct a Town Hall that can accommodate various civic events and meetings.*
- c. Promote the continuation of agricultural uses in appropriate areas.*

Goal 2: Develop a pedestrian and bicycle friendly network of trails, sidewalks and greenways linking residential, recreation, commercial, civic, and institutional uses.

Objectives:

- a. Adopt a comprehensive “Trail and Sidewalk Plan” showing locations of planned trails and developer required walks.*
- b. Require the construction of trails and sidewalks that connect streets and neighborhoods to one another, as well as to other appropriate non-residential uses.*
- c. Require the installation of street trees from the recommended tree list to be placed between the sidewalk and curb to create a pleasant walking environment and a separation from the street.*
- d. Actively seek grants to assist the town in developing a Greenway Trail system along Mill Creek and other tributaries.*

Goal 3: Balance the need for new commercial growth with the desire to preserve existing businesses and the desire to enhance the existing small town character.

Objectives:

- a. *Promote a walkable, compact core of commercial, civic, institutional and residential uses near and within the existing commercial services area around Oldham Drive, that requires buildings scaled to serve the local population.*
- b. *Encourage revitalization of the Historic District that would enhance the character of Nolensville while creating a regional specialty shopping and dining area.*
- c. *Accommodate larger scale, regional type commercial on the northern town boundary adjacent to the proposed commercial node at Concord and Burkitt Road intersections with Nolensville Road.*
- d. *Avoid conventional strip commercial appearance by limiting the amount of parking visible from Arterial roads and controlling the placement of the buildings.*

Goal 4: Encourage the development of quality residential neighborhoods that provide housing opportunity for a wide range of buyers and that will support the cost-effective delivery of urban services.

Objectives:

- a. *Encourage a mix of housing styles and options within planned unit developments.*
- b. *Improve and preserve the quality and value of the existing housing stock.*
- c. *Encourage the development of stable neighborhoods.*
- d. *Coordinate new residential development with the availability and capacity of essential urban services.*
- e. *Identify potential effects of new development upon surrounding development, the natural environment and existing infrastructure.*

Goal 5: Develop a well-planned system of interconnected streets that efficiently move traffic on arterial and collector streets while providing safe local streets that are conducive to residential uses.

Objectives:

- a. *Maintain a Major Thoroughfare Plan that clearly identifies proposed future roads so right-of-way dedication can occur during the approval process of individual development projects.*
- b. *Work with TDOT to maintain a maximum 3-lane section on Nolensville Road within the historic district limits of Nolensville.*

- c. *Adopt a fair and reasonable traffic impact fee to help mitigate the impact of future development.*
- d. *Require all development to make road and traffic improvements that are directly related to the specific development.*
- e. *Support the construction of a Nolensville Road by-pass around the historic district center of town.*

Goal 6: Protect, conserve and enhance the Town's natural resources and beauty.

Objectives:

- a. *Consider the development of residential areas to preserve open space, woodlands, and environmentally sensitive areas and to reduce the amount of infrastructure to be maintained by the Town.*
- b. *Require the development of usable open space and park areas as part of residential development that is both easily accessible for residents and visible to the community.*
- c. *Establish zoning that limits the number of future residential units to be consistent with the adopted UGB plan.*

Goal 7: Work closely with Williamson County to ensure that the educational needs of the children and the recreational needs of all residents are met.

Objectives

- a. *Coordinate school capacities with new development proposals.*
- b. *Develop joint recreational and park policies with the county recreation department.*

Goal 8: Encourage limited industrial development to provide jobs for local residents and to diversify the tax base of the town.

Objectives

- a. *Match industrial growth with existing and planned infrastructure.*
- b. *Identify appropriate sites for industry.*
- c. *Ensure that adverse impacts are minimized.*

LAND USE POLICIES

The policies which follow hereafter form the framework for the Land Use Policy Plan map and for decisions that may be made on development proposals and rezoning requests.

The plan indicates general locations for the different types of land uses. These locations were selected on the basis of their qualities as places to live, availability of utilities, physiographic characteristics of the land, existing development trends, transportation influences and limitations, and plans of adjoining governmental jurisdictions.

A. POLICIES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The plan recommends general densities at which residential development should occur. These recommendations are based upon analyses of past and current patterns of development, availability of sanitary sewers, land character, and other factors. The densities are classified into four general categories as follows:

Low Density	less than 1 dupa*
Low Medium Density	1 - 2 dupa
Medium Density	2 - 4 dupa
High Density	4 - 6 dupa

* dwelling units per acre

1. Residential development may be permitted to occur at a density appropriate for the area based on compatibility with existing development, capacity of the infrastructure system and the capability of the land area. Where sewer is available, low medium and higher density subdivisions may occur.
2. Residential densities in areas without sewer availability should be one dwelling unit per acre or less, depending upon soil types.
3. High density development may be permitted to occur in proximity to areas of commercial concentration.
4. Planned unit developments may only be permitted in areas of Town where the following standards can be met:
 - a. The traffic can be safely accommodated on the street system and primary access to the property can be obtained without passing through existing developments;
 - b. The development preserves significant natural features;
 - c. The development is basically compatible with existing development or can be appropriately screened from existing development;
5. Established residential neighborhoods should be preserved through an active codes enforcement program and elimination of incompatible conditions.
6. Creative street configurations and traffic calming devices on local streets should be

incorporated into all subdivision designs to slow traffic and create safe neighborhood environment.

7. The continuation of agricultural uses should be encouraged by the development of zoning provisions that allow such activities.
8. In order to obtain sensitive and superior design all subdivisions should be designed incorporating the skills of all designers including surveyors, civil engineers and landscape architects.
9. The area south of Rocky Fork Road and the Village Area to Williams Road and York Road, including the properties just south of York Road and in the corporate limits, should be developed as single-family residential, conventional subdivisions.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

1. Land immediately adjacent to streams should be left in a natural state to control erosion and sedimentation of such streams. Natural drainage courses should not be altered except when absolutely necessary. All such stream and drainage ways should be incorporated into a development design that uses such areas as amenities.
2. Flood plain areas should be limited in development intensity to those activities that do not obstruct flood flows. No construction should be permitted that will materially increase the degree of flooding.
3. Construction on slopes greater than 15 percent should be strictly controlled to avoid soil slippage and slump. Public roads should generally not be constructed on grades in excess of 10 percent and prohibited on grades in excess of 15 percent.
4. Strict performance standards should be enforced for all industrial or commercial activities to control and reduce noise, vibration, glare, air pollution, and storage of toxic or hazardous materials.
5. Natural vegetation should be preserved as much as possible through sensitive design and development practices. The siting and scale of all structures and roads should be harmonious with and sensitive to the character of the entire area and an asset to the site on which it is located.
6. Landscaping should be incorporated into all development activities, both to enhance a site and to be used as transitional screening between residential and commercial areas. Landscaping plans should include shade trees as well as other plants.

7. A street tree program should be instituted to encourage the preservation of existing trees on public rights-of-way as well as adjacent private land and the planting of additional trees which are appropriate to the streetscape.
8. Hill tops and ridge lines should be protected by developing a map of areas to be protected and by limiting the location and height of structures.

C. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

If growth in the city and the adjoining urban area continues as expected, demands for commercial development will increase as well. Due to the fact that Nolensville is bisected by Nolensville Road, which is the only major highway in town, there will be continual pressure to “strip zone” the highway in a commercial classification. Strip commercial development is characterized by strings of commercial structures along a major roadway, with each business having its own curb access point and with no connections from one business to another. At the same time, the Nolensville Road corridor is the only area where commercial development is feasible at this time. In order to avoid the typical commercial strip and maintain existing small town atmosphere but also to allow development to occur in a manner that will benefit the area, Nolensville will have to be creative and resilient in applying zoning and development controls.

1. A Town Center should be developed in the central area of town incorporating a Town Hall, civic and institutional uses and a mixture of commercial uses catering to the local population and including high density residential developments. The center should be compact and walkable.
2. The Village area should incorporate traditional local businesses as well as residential uses and second floor residential uses over first floor businesses.
3. The Village area should include requirements for a “build-to” setback line with prohibitions on parking in the front of buildings.
4. Commercial areas other than the Village should also restrict the amount of parking in the front of buildings and visible from the arterial road, and placement of buildings should enhance the visual impact of development. Any consideration of commercial rezoning should require the application of the commercial corridor overlay standards.
5. Major regional commercial development with large building footprints should be accommodated on the north end of the urban growth boundary.
6. A mix of commercial, high density residential and institutional land uses should be encouraged along Nolensville Road in order to avoid a typical strip of commercial uses.

7. Connectivity between adjacent uses and shared driveways shall be encouraged in order to limit the number of curb cuts along Nolensville Road and to enable customers to park once and walk from one business to another.

D. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Nolensville has a limited land base that is suitable for industry, and access via only Nolensville Road is also a factor that reduces potential for the town. Therefore, industry should be restricted to those types that will fill the need for jobs and diversification and that can meet strict standards of performance with limited land requirements.

1. The location of industries within controlled industrial parks should be encouraged as opposed to development on isolated lots.
2. Potential sites should be identified and protected.
3. Strict performance standards and screening and buffering of adjoining properties should be required.
4. Large distribution type facilities that generate large volumes of truck traffic with the accompanying expanses of paved parking and maneuvering lots should generally be avoided.

E. COMMUNITY FACILITY POLICIES

Community facility activities include those uses that provide various kinds of services to the public such as governmental services, cultural and religious activities, health care and social services, institutional uses and non-institutional civic activities. They can have significant impact in the area in which they are located. Many times a site specific analysis is required in order to determine the appropriateness of the location.

1. Governmental services by their nature must be located in an area appropriate for the service provided.
2. Non-institutional civic as well as cultural and religious activities should locate within or adjacent to commercial areas and may be used as buffers between commercial and residential areas.
3. Intense institutional activities should have locations with major street access, and adequate traffic circulation patterns should be internally designed.
4. Encroachment into adjacent non-institutional areas by future expansion should be avoided.

F. OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A land use plan does not exist in a void. Many activities not directly related to land use have an impact on land use patterns and changes. Such functional areas as the location of schools, construction of roads, construction of sewer trunk lines, and the timing of other improvements can have a profound impact on land use. Thus, this section of general policies provides recommendations for some of these peripheral areas.

TRANSPORTATION

1. The development of land should be coordinated with the development of street and highway systems.
2. The capacity of a street or intersection should be a factor in determining the justification for rezoning or for the application of overlay districts.
3. Future "strip" commercial development along major roads should be avoided.
4. The town should cooperate in the establishment of a regional mass transit system.
5. Developers should pay for and install all necessary traffic control devices that are necessitated by the development.
6. Private roads constructed in planned unit developments, or where permitted, should meet city specifications.
7. Traffic safety should be improved by the reduction of sign clutter along streets and highways.

CITY DESIGN AND BEAUTIFICATION

1. All new developments should be reviewed for zoning and landscape compliance and improved design by submission of site or planned unit development plans.
2. As a part of any revitalization of the historic district and appropriate adjacent areas, a sidewalk, street lighting, and utility concealment program should be initiated.
3. Building and construction activity in the vicinity of any historically and/or architecturally significant building or site should respect the presence and importance of these sites.

UTILITY SYSTEMS

To a large degree, the presence of public water, sewerage facilities, and electrical service determine the location, timing, and intensity of development. The construction of these utility systems can be made to act either as a control device or as a stimulant to growth.

Nolensville provides no utility services. Metro Water and Sewer Services provides the sewer service within the town, and water service is provided by the Nolensville College Grove Utility District. It is, therefore, difficult for the town to institute comprehensive utility policies as a growth management tool. For example, improved fire flows cannot be achieved without the agreement and cooperation of the utility district. It is, therefore, imperative that a coordinated planning and working relationship be developed between the town and the utilities.

The following policies are stated to cover all available utilities:

1. All new developments within the primary sewer service area should be connected to the sanitary sewer system. Where extension of sewers is not economically feasible, development should be permitted only at very low densities.
2. Future fire flow requirements should be considered when water system improvements are made.
3. All new water line installations should be of sufficient size to provide the required fire flow plus potable water, and fire hydrants should be spaced so that no home is farther than 500 feet from a fire hydrant. In medium and high density developments, no home should be more than 300 feet from a fire hydrant.
4. Water systems in commercial or multi-family developments should be based on the fire flow requirements

APPENDIX A

A. The Nolensville Planning Commission (referred to as Commission hereinafter), in accordance with T.C.A. Section 13-4-Part 2, et seq., shall adopt a general plan for the physical development of the Town of Nolensville and may amend the general plan, including carrying any part of the subject matter to greater detail. The adoption of the plan, or any amendment to the plan or part thereof, including a land use policy plan or other related plan such as a transportation or public facilities plan, shall be by a resolution carried by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Commission. The action shall be recorded on the adopted plan or amendment and descriptive matter by the identifying signature of the Secretary of the Commission, and a copy of the plan or amendment shall be forwarded to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and also made available for review at Nolensville Town Hall and Town website.

1. **Public Hearing.** Prior to the consideration of a plan or an amendment to a plan, a public hearing before the Commission shall be set with 15 days notice required before hearing. .

2. **Plans, Updated Plans, Amendments.** Prior to the consideration by the Commission of any proposed plan or updated plan, at least one broadly publicized community meeting shall be held. The public hearing for a plan or updated plan shall be advertised in the body of a newspaper of general circulation 15 days prior to the hearing. Notice also shall be mailed 15 days prior to the hearing to all persons who have registered with Town Staff or otherwise have contacted the Town staff to request notice prior to the Commission's consideration of the plan, updated plan, or amendment. In addition, an attempt shall be made to notify any representative groups that may be impacted by the proposed amendment and organizations known to the Town's staff as groups that represent the interests of neighborhood groups or similar interests. The Town Staff will review the request based upon all relevant factors, including, but not limited to, the size of the area to which the change will apply, and the degree of change in the recommended land use, design or other characteristic, and provide recommendations to the Planning Commission concerning the request.

3. **Housekeeping Amendments.** From time to time, the Town's staff may present to the Commission amendments to the general plan intended to bring the plan into conformance with past zone changes disapproved by the Commission as contrary to the land use policy plan, but approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Staff shall propose amendments under this subsection only when:

a. the zone change site and/or surrounding area has irrevocably changed in nature such that the existing land use plan for a specified area is no longer relevant, or

b. independent of the zone change in question, sound planning policy supports an amendment to the plan that would result in the zoning being brought into conformance. Such periodic housekeeping amendments shall be subject to the public hearing requirements described above.

4. **Mailing of Notices.** When, in the opinion of the Town Planner, the mailing requirements of the subsections above would result in an excessive number of notices being mailed, he/she may impose a reasonable limitation on the number of notices to be mailed to individual owners of property.

B. **Zone Change Proposal in Conflict with General Plan.** If a zone change request is submitted which, in the opinion of staff is contrary to the general plan, land use policy plan, or other related plan then the Town Staff shall advise the applicant of its opinion and recommend that the applicant prepare and present to the Commission an amendment or addition to the plan that would be consistent with the proposed zone. The applicant may request to appear before the Commission to determine if the Commission finds that there is a conflict with the General Plan. Any such proposed plan amendment or addition shall be considered according to the procedures set forth in Rule A., above. Other proposals to request an amendment or addition to the general plan may come from the following:

- (1) An approved motion or resolution from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen,
- (2) An approved motion or resolution from the Planning Commission, or
- (3) From a property owner/applicant or his/her designee with property owner's permission.

In the case of the applicant as a property owner(s) or such designee, the applicant shall submit a plan amendment request to the planning commission. A land use plan amendment and a rezoning request shall not be placed on the same agenda except for extenuating circumstances approved by the Town Planner or other designee of the Mayor; and, such amendments may be limited to quarterly periods, if determined necessary by the Town Planner, depending on the size and/or degree of changes or number of requests received. The Town Planner shall consider the validity and reasonableness of a request for determination of further processing. The requests shall contain at a minimum the following:

- (1) A description of the land use character of the planning neighborhood in which the requested site is located and, if applicable, other neighborhoods in which the request will have direct impacts.
- (2) A general description of the proposed development and how it will be compatible with the neighborhood in which it will be located and, if applicable, other planning neighborhoods in which the request will have direct impacts.
- (3) The conditions that have changed to make the land use plan amendment request valid.
- (4) How the project will support the growth management policies of the Town of Nolensville and Commission's Land Use Policies Plan and Map and/or related policy plans such as transportation or public facilities.
- (5) The planning objectives of the development.
- (6) If area is located within the Annexation Buffer Overlay, applicant must

obtain review and comments from the City of Brentwood and submit these comments to the Nolensville Planning Staff.

The Town shall charge a fee to offset the costs of undertaking reviews of land use policy plan amendments. Such fee will be set by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.